

# THE LOST WORLD

BY SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

## SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

**EDWARD D. MALONE**, a reporter on "The London Courier," was told by his sweetheart, Gladys Hungerton, that she desired above all things to marry a man of deeds, and would have nothing to do with him sentimentally till he had become such an individual. In despair he asked his paper for a special mission that would enable him to distinguish himself. He was given the assignment to interview Professor George Edward Challenger, a famous scientist who had returned from South America two years previously with the announcement that he had discovered some prehistoric monsters and showed alleged pictures of them. His statements were received with derision by the entire scientific world; and the professor, who was exceedingly belligerent, refused to have anything more to do with his fellow scientists and physically assaulted anybody that attempted to question him.

At an exceedingly turbulent meeting of the Zoological Institute, Professor Summerlee (a veteran scientist), Sir John Roxton (a famous hunter and traveler), and Malone volunteered to go to South America to verify Challenger's statements.

The party, including Challenger, finally reached Maple White Land, a great plateau several hundred miles inland from the upper Amazon, where a pterodactyl flew over the camp; thus removing all doubt of Challenger's integrity.

They had just managed to reach the top, when a treacherous native destroyed the tree ladder by which they had ascended, and left them marooned in the midst of a terrible wilderness. One faithful negro remained and helped them get up their supplies on a rope.

The following day they discovered a lot of dinosaurs, and then were attacked by an entire flock of pterodactyls, barely escaping with their lives.

and going to the very edge of the plateau saw him sitting grinning at us upon the top of the opposite pinnacle!

"All well, Massa Challenger, all well!" he cried. "Me stay here. No fear. You always find me when you want." His honest black face, and the immense view before us, which carried us halfway back to the affluent of the Amazon, helped us to realize that we were really upon this earth in the twentieth century and had not by some magic been conveyed to some raw planet in its earliest and wildest state. How difficult it was to realize that the violet line upon the far horizon was well advanced to that great river upon which huge steamers ran, and folk talked of the small affairs of life, while we, marooned among the creatures of a bygone age, could but gaze at it and yearn for all that it meant.

**ONE** other memory remains with me of this wonderful day, and with it I will close this letter. The two professors, their tempers aggravated no doubt by their injuries, had fallen out as to whether our assailants were of the genus *Pterodactylus* or *Dimorphodon*, and high words had ensued. To avoid their wrangling, I moved some little way apart, and was seated smoking on the trunk of a fallen tree, when Lord Roxton strolled over in my direction.

"I say, Malone," said he, "do you remember that place where those beasts were?"

"Very clearly."

"A sort of volcanic pit, was it not?"

"Exactly," said I.

"Did you notice the soil?"

"Rocks."

"But round the water, where the reeds were?"

"It was a bluish soil. It looked like clay."

"Exactly. A volcanic tube full of blue clay."

"What of that?" I asked.

"Oh, nothing, nothing," said he, and strolled back to where the voices of the contending men of science rose in a prolonged duet, the high, strident note of Summerlee rising and falling to

the sonorous bass of Challenger.

I should have thought no more of Lord Roxton's remark were it not that once again that night I heard him mutter to himself, "Blue clay—clay in a volcanic tube!" They were the last words I heard before I dropped into an exhausted sleep.

## CHAPTER XI.

### For Once I Was the Hero

**L**ORD ROXTON was right when he thought that some specially toxic quality might lie in the bite of the horrible creatures which had attacked us. On the morning after our first adventure upon the plateau, both Summerlee and I were in great pain and fever, while Challenger's knee was so bruised that he could hardly limp. We kept to our camp all day, therefore; Lord Roxton busying himself, with such help as we could give him, in raising the height and thickness of the thorny walls which were our only defense.

I remember that during the whole long day I was haunted by the feeling that we were closely observed; though by whom or whence I could give no guess. So strong was the impression that I told Professor Challenger of it, who put it down to the cerebral excitement caused by my fever. Again and again I glanced round swiftly with the conviction that I was about to see something; but only



A Succession of the Most Frightful Screams.

## CHAPTER X. (Continued)

### The Most Wonderful Things Have Happened

**B**UT surely no men ever had just such a day a day since the world began. Some fresh surprise was ever in store for us.

When, following the course of our brook, we at last reached our glade and saw the thorny barricade of our camp, we thought that our adventures were at an end. But we had something more to think of before we could rest.

The gate of Fort Challenger had been untouched, the walls were unbroken, and yet it had been visited by some strange and powerful creature in our absence. No footmark showed a trace of its nature, and only the overhanging branch of the enormous ginkgo tree suggested how it might have come and gone; but of the malevolent strength there was ample evidence in the condition of our stores. They were strewn at random all over the ground, and one tin of meat had been crushed into pieces so as to extract the contents. A case of cartridges had been shattered into matchwood, and one of the brass shells lay shredded into pieces beside it. Again the feeling of vague horror came upon our souls, and we gazed round with frightened eyes at the dark shadows which lay round us, in all of which some fearsome shape might be lurking.

How good it was when we were hailed by the voice of Zambo,